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## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/58/507)*]

### 58/162. Use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolution 57/196 of 18 December 2002, and taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/2 of 14 April 2003,[1]

*Recalling also* all of its relevant resolutions, in which, inter alia, it condemned any State that permitted or tolerated the recruitment, financing, training, assembly, transit and use of mercenaries with the objective of overthrowing the Governments of States Members of the United Nations, especially those of developing countries, or of fighting against national liberation movements, and recalling further the relevant resolutions and international instruments adopted by the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Organization of African Unity, inter alia, the Organization of African Unity Convention for the elimination of mercenarism in Africa,[2]

*Reaffirming* the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations concerning the strict observance of the principles of sovereign equality, political independence, the territorial integrity of States, the self-determination of peoples, the non-use of force or of the threat of use of force in international relations and non-interference in affairs within the domestic jurisdiction of States,

*Reaffirming also* that, by virtue of the principle of self-determination, all peoples have the right freely to determine their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and that every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter,

*Reaffirming further* the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,[3]

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 3* (E/2003/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1490, No. 25573.

[3] Resolution 2625 (XXV), annex.

*Alarmed and concerned* at the danger that the activities of mercenaries constitute to peace and security in developing countries, in particular in Africa and in small States,

*Deeply concerned* at the loss of life, the substantial damage to property and the negative effects on the policy and economies of affected countries resulting from criminal mercenary activities,

*Convinced* that, notwithstanding the way in which they are used or the form that they take to acquire some semblance of legitimacy, mercenaries or mercenary-related activities are a threat to peace, security and the self-determination of peoples and an obstacle to the enjoyment of human rights by peoples,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of the use of mercenaries as a means of impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination;[4]

2. *Reaffirms* that the use of mercenaries and their recruitment, financing and training are causes for grave concern to all States and violate the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

3. *Recognizes* that armed conflict, terrorism, arms trafficking and covert operations by third Powers, inter alia, encourage the demand for mercenaries on the global market;

4. *Urges* all States to take the necessary steps and to exercise the utmost vigilance against the menace posed by the activities of mercenaries and to take legislative measures to ensure that their territories and other territories under their control, as well as their nationals, are not used for the recruitment, assembly, financing, training and transit of mercenaries for the planning of activities designed to impede the right of peoples to self-determination, to destabilize or overthrow the Government of any State or to dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the right of peoples to self-determination;

5. *Requests* all States to exercise the utmost vigilance against any kind of recruitment, training, hiring or financing of mercenaries by private companies offering international military consultancy and security services, as well as to impose a specific ban on such companies intervening in armed conflicts or actions to destabilize constitutional regimes;

6. *Welcomes* the entry into force of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries,[5] and calls upon all States that have not yet done so to consider taking the necessary action to accede to or ratify the Convention;

7. *Welcomes also* the cooperation extended by those countries that have received visits from the Special Rapporteur;

8. *Welcomes further* the adoption by some States of national legislation that restricts the recruitment, assembly, financing, training and transit of mercenaries;

9. *Calls upon* States to investigate the possibility of mercenary involvement whenever and wherever criminal acts of a terrorist nature occur and to bring to trial

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[4] See A/58/115.

[5] Resolution 44/34, annex.

those found responsible or to consider their extradition, if so requested, in accordance with domestic law and applicable bilateral or international treaties;

10. *Welcomes* the organization, in Geneva from 13 to 17 May 2002, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 56/232 of 24 December 2001, of the second meeting of experts on traditional and new forms of mercenary activities as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, and takes note of its conclusions;[6]

11. *Takes note with appreciation* of the proposal for an enhanced legal definition of mercenaries contained in the report of the Special Rapporteur, and requests the Secretary-General to circulate it to the Member States and to seek their views in order to include them in the report of the Special Rapporteur to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

12. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as a matter of priority, to publicize the adverse effects of the activities of mercenaries on the right of peoples to self-determination and, when requested and where necessary, to render advisory services to States that are affected by those activities;

13. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to continue to take into account, in the discharge of his mandate, the fact that mercenary activities continue to occur in many parts of the world and are taking on new forms, manifestations and modalities;

14. *Recommends* that the Commission on Human Rights renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for a period of three years;

15. *Urges* all States to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of his mandate;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide the Special Rapporteur with all the necessary assistance and support for the fulfilment of his mandate, both professional and financial, including through the promotion of cooperation between the Special Rapporteur and other components of the United Nations system that deal with countering mercenary-related activities;

17. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to consult States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the present resolution and to report, with specific recommendations, to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session his findings on the use of mercenaries to undermine the right of peoples to self-determination;

18. *Decides* to consider at its fifty-ninth session the question of the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination under the item entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination".

*77th plenary meeting*
*22 December 2003*

[6] See E/CN.4/2003/4.